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ACTION ARA-15
INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ADS-00 SY-05 SYE-00 DCT-02 OC-06
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FM AMEMBASSY KINGSTON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2432
INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN
AMEMBASSY CARACAS
AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY NASSAU
AMEMBASSY OTTAW
AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN
USINT HAVANA
COMNAVBASE GTMO
C O N F I D E N T I A L KINGSTON 2969
E.O. 12065: GDS 4/22/86 (LAWRENCE L.) OR-AFP
TAGS: PINS, JM
SUBJECT: VIOLENCE INCREASES
REF: KINGSTON 2734

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY _____ DATE 25 JUN 1982
RDS☐or XDS☐EXT. DATE _____
TS AUTH. _____ REASON(S) _____
ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS ☐
DECLASSIFIED/RELEASABLE ☒
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AMB
or FOI EXEMPTIONS _____

1. (C) AFTER A WEEK OF SPORADIC POLITICAL VIOLENCE, SUNDAY MORNING SEEMS TO HAVE ELEVATED THE VIOLENCE TO A NEW PLANE. A DISCIPLINED GROUP OF "PARAMILITARIES" WITH AUTOMATIC WEAPONS INVADED A JAMAICA LABOR PARTY (JLP) AREA, KILLED FIVE, WOUNDED ABOUT A DOZEN, AND ESCAPED BEFORE THE POLICE ARRIVED. THE VIOLENCE SO FAR IS CONFINED TO THE GHETTOS OF KINGSTON AND DOES NOT REPRESENT A THREAT TO USG PERSONNEL OR

TOURISTS. END SUMMARY.
2. (U) THE INCREASING VIOLENCE IN KINGSTON ASSOCIATED WITH POLITICAL FACTIONS (SEE REFTEL) TOOK AN OMINOUS TURN FOR THE WORSE IN THE EARLY HOURS OF SUNDAY MORNING, APRIL 20. AS REPORTED BY ALL THE MEDIA, A GROUP OF MEN (SOMEWHERE BETWEEN 25 AND 100, THE REPORTS VARY) DRESSED IN BLACK FATIGUES, INVADED THE "SOUTHSIDE" AREA OF EAST CENTRAL KINGSTON (MICHAEL MANLEY'S CONSTITUENCY). THE INVADERS SPRAYED BULLETS AROUND FROM AUTOMATIC WEAPONS, AND THEN ATTACKED A JAMAICA LABOR PARTY (JLP) FUND-RAISING EVENT. FOUR PERSONS WERE KILLED INSTANTLY, A FIFTH DIED IN A HOSPITAL SHORTLY THEREAFTER, AND ABOUT A DOZEN WERE ADMITTED TO HOSPITAL WITH WOUNDS. THE GUNMEN HAD LEFT BY THE TIME THE POLICE ARRIVED.
3. (U) ACCORDING TO THE MEDIA, AND THE POLICE INFORMATION

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CENTER, THIS WAS A DISCIPLINED AND WELL-TRAINED PARAMILITARY GROUP WITH SOPHISTICATED WEAPONS; NOT THE USUAL RAGGED BAND OF PARTISAN THUGS WHO USUALLY BECOME PREOCCUPIED WITH ROBBERY. THE COUNTRY SEEMS TO BE TAKING THIS AS A SERIOUS ESCALATION OF VIOLENCE. MANLEY TOURED HIS CONSTITUENCY LATER IN THE MORNING (BUT NOT SOUTHSIDE, WHICH IS A HOSTILE JLP ENCLAVE) AND ISSUED A STATEMENT. HE DEPLORED VIOLENCE ON BOTH SIDES BUT BLAMED THE SITUATION MAINLY ON THE JLP, WHICH HE CLAIMED HAD INTRODUCED GUNS INTO HIS ERSTWHILE PEACEFUL CONSTITUENCY.

4. (U) THIS INCIDENT FOLLOWED A WEEK OF PARTISAN VIOLENCE. ON MONDAY NIGHT (APRIL 14) THE CROSSROADS (MAJOR KINGSTON CENTER) JLP OFFICE WAS BOMBED OUT, WITH MANY SURROUNDING WINDOWS BLOWN-NO CASUALTIES REPORTED. ON TUESDAY NIGHT (APRIL 15) THERE WERE FOUR SCATTERED KILLINGS IN THE CITY, ALL ATTRIBUTED TO POLITICAL VIOLENCE BY THE POLICE. ON WEDNESDAY NIGHT ONE KILLING WAS ATTRIBUTED TO POLITICS. THE MEDIA REPORTED OTHER INCIDENTS

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ON THURSDAY AND FRIDAY NIGHTS, BUT SO FAR THE POLICE HAVE NOT COMMENTED. THREE OF OUR SOURCES FAMILIAR WITH THE GHETTO TELL US THAT THE MEDIA ARE ONLY REPORTING A SMALL PERCENTAGE OF WHAT IS ACTUALLY HAPPENING AS (1) THE REPORTERS ARE AFRAID TO GO INTO THE TROUBLED AREAS, AND (2) THE MEDIA ARE DEPENDING ON THE POLICE INFORMATION CENTER, WHICH HAS BEEN MUCH MORE COOPERATIVE AND FORTHCOMING TO THE MEDIA SINCE COMMISSIONER BOWES TOOK OVER BUT STILL MUST TAKE A RESPONSIBLE ATTITUDE ON CHECKING FACTS.

5. (C) COMMENT: THE JAMAICA LABOR PARTY HAS DESCRIBED THE SATURDAY NIGHT INCIDENT AS A CALCULATED, COLD-BLOODED MASSACRE, AND SAID IT SIGNALS THE BEGINNING OF THE USE OF CUBAN-TRAINED PARAMILITARIES. BUT KNOWNING HOW RUMOR ABOUNDS HERE AND STORIES GET BLOWN OUT OF PROPORTION, IT IS TOO EARLY FOR US TO TELL IF A NEW, MORE-ORGANIZED TYPE OF TERRORISM HAS SURFACED. A LEA POLICE SOURCE SAID THAT THE UNIFORMED GROUP WERE BRIGADISTAS TRAINED IN CUBA. THE GROUP DID HAVE AUTOMATIC WEAPONS, WELL-AUTHENTICATED BY THE POLICE (AND PRIVATELY FOR US BY THE JAMAICA DEFENSE FORCE). MONDAY, APRIL 21, WAS RIFE WITH FURTHER REPORRTS OF GHETTO VIOLENCE, AS YET UNCONFIRMED AS THIS IS WRITTEN. MONDAY FEATURED A DEMONSTRATION IN HALFWAY TREE AGAINST THE POLICE BY PNP PARTISANS WHO WERE CHAMPIOINING THE PNP PARTY GENERAL SECRETARY, D.K. DUNCAN. HE WAS SUPPOSED TO BE ARRAIGNED IN THE HALF WAY TREE COURT ON CHARGES OF ASSAULTING A POLICEMAN (KINGSTON 2679), BUT HE DID NOT SHOW UP FOR THE PROCEEDINGS, ACCORDING TO THE RADIO. WE EMPHASIZE THAT SO FAR THIS VIOLENCE, WHATEVER ITS DIMENSIONS, IS CONFINED TO THE DOWNTOWN GHETTO AREAS OF KINGSTON AND DOES NOT YET REPRESENT A THREAT TO U.S. PERSONNEL OR ANY TOURIST AREAS. WE DO NOT KNOW HOW IT IS BEING REPORTED IN THE U.S. WITHIN THE WEEK WE HAVE HAD VISITS FROM AP, UPI, U.S. NEWS AND WORLD REPORT, LONDON SUNDAY TIMES, AND LOS ANGELES TIMES CORRESPONDENTS.

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